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PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CITY RECOGNIZES 40TH “EARTH DAY”

Mayor Kiss Highlights Waste Reduction Program in City Hall Offices; Cites City Environmental Initiatives

April 21, 2010 - Burlington, VT. On the eve of the 40th Earth Day on April 22, Burlington Mayor Bob Kiss announced today the implementation of a waste reduction program at City Hall and other downtown offices—this effort started with a pilot compost program in several departments which is now being rolled out to all downtown offices. On Earth Day, from 11 am to 1 pm, there will be a table in front of City Hall with staff from the City’s community gardening program and from the Chittenden Solid Waste District with information about composting.

The composting program at City Hall follows a waste sorting event the City held this past September based on what was being thrown out in City offices. An analysis of trash showed that about 33 percent of what was being thrown out could have been composted. With the involvement of the Burlington Sustainability Action Team, Planning Department, Legacy Project, and Clerk-Treasurer’s Office, the City designed and began to implement a composting program.

This follows the implementation of several City environmental initiatives over the past year, including:

- Creation of a City-wide stormwater management ordinance and enforcement system;
- Development and implementation of an Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy;

- Installation of permanent filtered water coolers in City Hall to replace portable purchased water bottles, reducing truck trips to the downtown and saving money and staff time;
- Consolidated “green” purchasing for cleaning products at Fire Stations;
- Enhanced stormwater management at the Burlington International Airport.

Mayor Kiss praised these efforts in recognition of Earth Day while citing the challenges caused by global climate change. “The occasion of the 40th Earth Day is an opportunity to appreciate the importance of our environmental resources to our health and community and economic vitality, as well as the urgent challenge of climate change. I appreciate the work that we’ve done as a City – over the last 12 months as well as the last 20 years – to address climate change and the health of our environment. Yet we need to do more. We know that world temperatures have increased more over the last 10 years than they have during any ten-year period in recorded history. Over the next year we’ll continue to look at ways we can reduce our carbon footprint and create an even healthier community.”

The Mayor’s Burlington Sustainability Action Team – with representatives of every City department – met on April 20 to review progress over the last year and goals for the coming year. One area identified as a high priority is to improve the efficiency of the City’s vehicle fleet as well as to reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled by City employees both commuting to work and while on the job.

In the coming months, the City anticipated finalization of its updated Climate Action Plan. More information about this effort can be found at: <http://burlingtonclimateaction.com/>. More information about the City’s Legacy Project can be found at: <http://burlingtonlegacyproject.org/>. More information about Earth Day can be found at: <http://www.earthday.org/>.